(c) if so, what steps Government propose to take to safeguard the interest of the banks, financial institutions and debenture holders etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In accordance with the practices and usages customary amongst the banks and in conformity with the provisions of statutes governing the financial intitutions as also the provisions of the Public Financial Institutions (Obligations as to Fidelity and Secrecy) Act, 1983, the information in respect of its constituents cannot be divulged.

(c) Several steps taken by banks/financial institutions to safeguard their interests *inter-alia* include framing and implementation of recovery policy, filing of suits with civil courts, filing cases with Debts Recovery Tribunals, compromise settlements through Settlement Advisory Committees and monitoring and follow up of non-performing accounts.

Economic Reforms

1797. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that International Monetary Fund (IMF) has asked Government to carry out drastic economic reforms including rapid deregulation in industry and agriculture;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to expedite the place of reforms in accordance with the directives from the IMF?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) and (b) In the Meeting of IMF Executive Board, to discuss the Article IV Consultation Report on India, held on June 19,2000, the Executive Directors agreed that the new Government's strong commitment to delivering a higher rate of economic growth so as to reduce poverty more rapidly was achievable, provided that determined efforts were undertaken to strengthen the fiscal position and to accelerate the implementation of structural reforms. Directors considered that the presently favourable economic environment presented the authorities with the unique opportunity to press ahead with reforms in key areas. In this regard, they emphasized the need for more

rapid deregulation of the industrial and agricultural sectors in order for India to benefit from the growing globalization of goods and capital markets.

(c) The Government of India takes policy actions on the basis of its own priorities. Appropriate policy measures are undertaken whenever necessary in the light of emerging economic situations.

Ganja Smuggling in Andhra Pradesh

1798. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh has become focal point for Ganja smuggling;

(b) whether narcotics are being despatched every day in private vehicles to Bangalore, Mumabi, Hyderabad and other big cities for the last two years; and

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken to check such Ganja smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) There is no information or intelligence to suggest that Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh has become the focal point for ganja smuggling and that narcotics are being despatched from there to other cities.

(c) Does not arise.

Promotions in Regional Rural Banks

1799. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has been taken by Government on promotions in respect of all cadres in Regional Rural Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government has notified the Regional Rural Banks (Appointment and Promotion of Officers and other Employees) Rules, 1998 to provide for promotion in all cadres in Regional Rural Banks. The ban on promotion has also been lifted vide order dated 15th June, 1999.